

FBI Reports It Is Using About 50 Taps and Bugs

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FBI surveillance on subversion and organized crime has remained stable since last March when FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover reported that a total of 47 telephone taps and six hidden microphones were in use, the Justice Department said last night.

Hoover said then—according to testimony released yesterday—that as of March 1, Attorney General John N. Mitchell had authorized and the FBI had installed 33 telephone taps and four bugging devices in national security cases.

He added that the FBI was operating 14 telephone taps and two microphone devices against organized crime. These surveillances were approved by the courts, he said, which had also authorized another 12 telephone taps against crime syndicate figures.

Hoover disclosed the wiretap and bugging figures in testimony March 17 before a House Appropriations subcommittee considering the FBI's fiscal 1972 budget request of \$318.6 million.

Last night, Justice Department officials said the FBI is presently operating "less than 50" telephone taps and bug-

ging devices in the national security field, all authorized by Attorney General Mitchell. The officials said the FBI has 16 telephone taps but no hidden microphones currently operating under court approval against organized crime.

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FBI Says It Is Using About 50 Taps, Bugs

HOOVER, From A1

In his testimony, Hoover did not distinguish between alleged domestic and foreign subversion. Mitchell contends that his approval alone is required for eavesdropping on all subversion. Others have challenged his right to wiretap alleged domestic subversives, and the Supreme Court now has the question under review.

Hoover told the subcommittee FBI wiretapping and bugging activities are "limited and stringently controlled."

Hoover said that published reports, which he characterized as "highly slanted and distorted," created the false impression that the FBI has an extensive network of "hundreds of electronic surveillances."

Responding to articles published Feb. 7 and 8 in The Washington Post, Hoover gave the subcommittee a memo he had written Attorney General Mitchell Feb. 9 in which he said the stories of FBI wiretapping were "replete with distortions, inaccuracies and outright falsehoods."

The articles quoted former

Attorney General Ramsey Clark as saying the number of FBI wiretaps were at least double the number Hoover reported to Congress. The articles also quoted "one well-informed source," and Clark implied, that the number of FBI wiretaps was reduced just before Hoover testified before a congressional committee and then resumed shortly afterwards.

The articles quoted other sources as raising the suspicion that the FBI bugged the office of Sen. Birch Bayh (D-Ind.) during the controversial nomination of Judge Clement Haynesworth Jr., for the Supreme Court and that the FBI tapped telephones of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Hoover pronounced all the allegation untrue.

The FBI director and subcommittee chairman John J. Rooney (D-N.Y.) together accused former Attorney General Clark of talking out of both sides of his mouth. Hoover explained why he called Clark a "jellyfish" in a Washington Post interview that followed publication of Clark's book critical of the 76-year-old director.

Hoover said he was reminded by his former assistant, Cartha DeLoach, that Clark had made a flattering speech about Hoover in 1967, prompting the director to listen to a replay of the record in which Clark "praised the bureau to the skies and then said the bureau is merely a reflection of the image of its director."

"When I listened to the recording of that speech and

read what Clark had said in his book I was so outraged it caused me to make the statement that he is a 'jellyfish,'" Hoover said.

Rooney responded that Clark "did the same thing to me." He said that Clark so praised him at a dinner in New York that "... it was to me a little sickening, he was laying it on so heavy." Then a year later, Rooney said, Clark endorsed his opponent in a primary election.

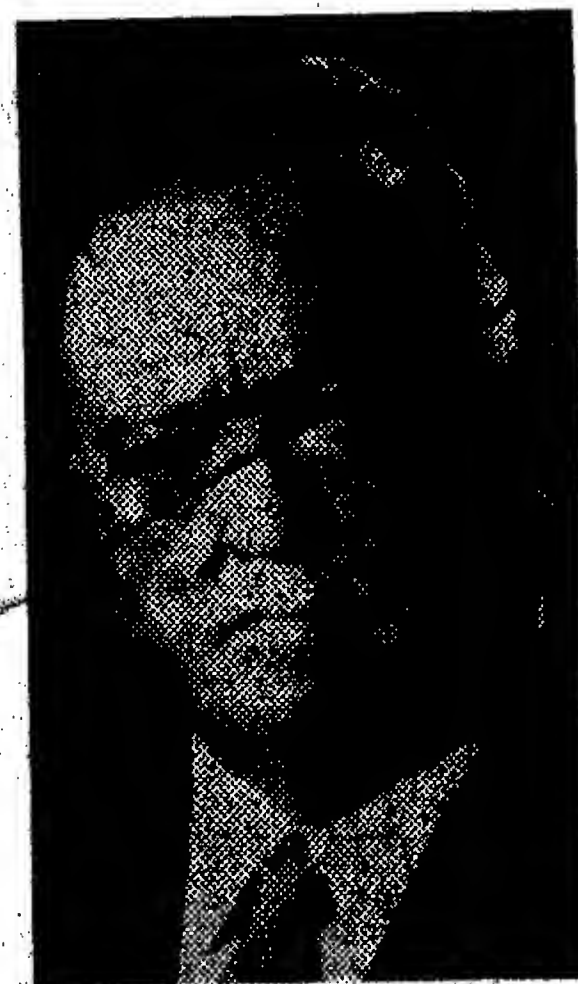
"He was too sirupy," Hoover agreed.

The director's aide and long-time associate, Clyde Tolson, told the subcommittee that the reason Hoover has four armored cars at his disposal is for his security in the face of continuing death threats.

Tolson said that during the first three months of this year, Hoover received 16 death threats. During 1970, he said, there were 26 threats against Hoover's life.

The cost of the 1970 vehicle was \$27,665, Hoover said, pointing out that the subcommittee has authorized the purchases over the years. He said two of the vehicles are stationed in Washington, one in New York and one in Los Angeles. Prior to his testimony, it was reported that one of the cars was stationed in Miami, where Hoover occasionally sojourns for the horse races.

Hoover said that he and Mitchell have used the armored Cadillacs in New York and Los Angeles. He also said the vehicles are available as "the needs arise for investigative purposes," but he did not specify how or when.



J. EDGAR HOOVER
... tells of surveillance

In asking for a budget increase of \$44.2 million over the current year, Hoover made it clear the FBI is stepping up its activities against New Left and black extremists, who he said have increased their "violent and terrorist tactics."

This was made clearer in FBI documents stolen March 8 from the FBI's Media, Pa., office. The documents indicated these groups should be kept under greater surveillance.

Although the Media thefts occurred nine days before Hoover testified, he did not mention them in the on-the-record portion of his testimony.

He charged that the financial underpinning of the Black Panther Party, which he described as the most active and potentially dangerous black extremist group, came from many prominent personalities. Hoover said actress Jane Fonda was a chief fund-raiser who reportedly solicited a \$6,000 donation from British actor Richard Burton.

Anna Louise Strong, who died in China in 1970, left the Panthers a legacy of \$17,000, he added.